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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/553,235	10/14/2005	Nobukazu Ikeda	SUGI0157	1287
24203 7590 04/27/2007 GRIFFIN & SZIPL, PC SUITE PH-1 2300 NINTH STREET, SOUTH ARLINGTON, VA 22204			EXAMINER PATEL, HARSHAD R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2855	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		04/27/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/553,235

Applicant(s)

IKEDA ET AL.

Examiner

Harshad Patel

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 April 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inushima et al. (6,550,325) in view of Nagata et al. (5,291,781) (hereinafter Inushima or Nagata).

Inushima teaches a thermal type mass flow rate sensor comprising a substrate having a fluid contacting surface (Fig. 1B), a thin film forming a temperature sensor and a heater mounted on the rear face side of the fluid contacting surface of the substrate. Inushima does not teach a metal substrate. Nagata, in the same field of endeavor, teaches the use of a metal substrate (col. 4, lines 30-35). It would have been obvious to a skilled individual to use the metal substrate as taught by Nagata for the silicon substrate of Inushima since this are mere alternatives and that minor modifications can be made to accommodate the use of the metal substrate. As to a specific thickness of the metal substrate, it would be within the scope of the skilled individual to use a thickness that would be properly installed thus reducing the size and also for better thermal conductance. As to providing an insulating film or a protective film, such coatings are necessary to protect the components and the diaphragm of the sensor from environment it will be used in. As to fastening the base with the substrate, it is known in the art that a substrate may be welded or spot welded or soldered to the structure it needs to support on for stability. It does not require any specific skill for an individual in the area where it may require a special talent.

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3. Claims 2, 4, 6-8, 10, 12, 13 and 15 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inushima in view of Nagata and further in view of Azima (6,062,077).

Inushima or Nagata does not teach the use of the sensor with a fluid controller with a specific structure as claimed. However, Azima teaches a thermal flow sensor coupled to a flow conduit and a fluid controller that has a sensor base having an inlet and an outlet and a body, wherein the body comprises a flow passage communicating with the inlet and outlet of the sensor base. It is inherent to provide a gasket when two elements are connected and that the fluid is being flown through it. It is within the skilled individual to use a specific type of gasket as long as it functions the same, i.e. to prevent leakage.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harshad Patel whose telephone number is (571) 272-2187. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (6:30 AM-5:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Lefkowitz can be reached on (571) 272-2180. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Harshad Patel
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2855

HP
4/24/07